



Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Policy (incorporating British Values)

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1. Introduction

The Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT) is a multi-academy trust with a faith designation and a Christian religious ethos that is both distinctive and inclusive. Distinctive in the sense that all decisions about the nature and purpose of the Academy are taken through the lens of Christian values, inclusive in the sense that all students and staff are equally valued for their uniqueness in the eyes of God and their belonging to the school community.

2. Ethos statement

Vision

The Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT) shares the Church of England’s Vision for Education 2016, “Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good”, which includes four basic elements wisdom, hope, community and dignity. We aim to deliver values-led education with the very best outcomes for children and young people.

Purpose

To provide high quality education enabling young people to flourish and grow: spiritually, in love and in understanding.

3. Scope/ aims

At Insert name Primary Academy we recognise that the personal development of pupils - spiritually, morally, socially and culturally - plays an essential part in their ability to learn and achieve, and

therefore to flourish. We aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures. All members of the school community are encouraged to develop into responsible citizens through the implementation of modern British Values. Modern British Values are shared through the thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of the children's SMSC development, enabling them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

4. Overall principles

- All curriculum areas have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum.
- The school community will be a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals and where forgiveness and the opportunity to start again is fundamental to the ethos of the school.
- The diversity of faith and spiritual traditions within the school community will be fully recognised.
- All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals.
- Pupils should learn to differentiate between right and wrong in as far as their actions affect other people. Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

5. Spiritual Development

Intent 'For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed' (John Bradford).

What is spirituality?

Spirituality concerns a person's relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements: self; others; transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality. (See Appendix A)

It is also vital that all of the adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality: implementation

1. Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, going for a walk
2. Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination
3. Valuing play opportunities
4. Singing often, especially with others.
5. Ensuring regular time for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful, saying sorry. Allow children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
6. Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings.
7. Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental. This is the foundation of our behaviour management approach.

8. Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
9. Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
10. Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets)
11. Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme
12. Read often to children, and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts as appropriate.

Structures to support and develop spirituality:

- Opportunities are planned across our whole curriculum.
- RE and PSHE lessons
- Collective Worship Programme
- Displays and pictures around the school
- Visits and visitors
- Amend as necessary

Impact: how do we know this is being effective?

Spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.

6. Social Development

The social development of pupils is characterised by:

- *Their use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds;*
- *Their willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively;*
- *Their acceptance and engagement with the **fundamental British values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; (See Appendix B)*
- *Their development of the skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain.*

More than any other aspect, children's social development is implicit in almost everything we do. Specific aspects include:

- Regular discussion activities, partner work and group work
- Regular mixing of seating arrangements in class
- Opportunities to work with children from other classes across the school
- Regular opportunities to share aspects of children's home life and background
- Children are taught how to work well with each other, how to resolve conflict, and how to work together to create a harmonious school environment.
- Amend as necessary

7. Moral Development

The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- *ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and apply this understanding in their own lives*
- *understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions*
- *interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.*

It is vital that children develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Our moral approach is centred on teaching values of justice, fairness, honesty and understanding. These values are rooted in our Christian foundation, but they are also ones which have a universal foundation. Specific areas of development include the following:

- All classes follow a clear, school-wide system of rewards and sanctions.
- All classes set their own rules within the context of the overall school rules.
- Children contribute strongly to school life through the school council.
- We strongly encourage children to take active roles in the running of the school, including: add in specific examples
- Children are regularly involved in activities designed to develop courageous advocacy (see Appendix C)
- Opportunities are explored through the curriculum for investigating moral and ethical issues – eg deforestation/different religious beliefs/why there are poor in the world.
- Opportunities within the curriculum to explore concepts of law and democracy (eg add specific examples)

8. Cultural Development

This is demonstrated by pupils’:

- *Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others*
- *Understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain*
- *knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain*
- *Willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities*
- *Interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity*

We are passionate about providing children with a rich and varied curriculum that provides many opportunities for developing cultural expression and understanding. Our strengths include:

- Regular visits and school trips, which help give a ‘Wow’ factor to topics. This includes visits to theatres; museums; archaeological sites; places of worship
- Regular visitors to the school, including people representing different faiths, disabilities
- Regular theatre visits and musical visits to the school
- Active participation by children in music festivals and concerts
- Music in the school which focuses on different aspects of singing, including modern song, folk song, songs from different cultures as well as a variety of musical genres
- Opportunities to learn a whole range of musical instruments, as well as participate in a choir, orchestra and flute ensemble
- Resources and displays in and around the school that reflect a multi-ethnic society, and the contribution of many different ethnic groupings to modern Britain.

- Good use made of children within the school to promote cultural development, through the celebration of festivals such as Eid, Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New Year.
- A range of sporting opportunities within and beyond the curriculum
- Add to/adapt as necessary

9. Roles and responsibilities

Subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the development of SMSC through their ongoing monitoring. There are specific aspects which are a part of the RE curriculum, or part of the Collective Worship cycle.

Key Stage/Phase Leaders have particular responsibility for monitoring/developing aspects of social and moral development.

The Headteacher and/or Assistant Head/s share the overall responsibility for ensuring that all of these aspects are high profile and both explicit and implicit in all we do.

10. Our Ethos and Values

As identified at the opening of this policy, our structure and approach here is underpinned by our Christian ethos and values, focused on an ethos that is both distinctive and inclusive.

In our adoption and subsequent adaptation of this policy we have asked ourselves two clear questions: “Is this policy and practice underpinned by our vision and values?” and “What is the impact of our vision and values on those subject to the policy?”. This is a key focus of our ongoing development of policy and practice.

11. Appendices

Appendix A: Spirituality

The four elements of Spirituality

Self

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

An alternative model uses the metaphors of 'windows, mirrors and doors':

Windows

- * Opportunities for children to be aware of the world in new ways, looking out into the world.
- * To wonder about life's 'WOWS. Things that are amazing.
- * To think about life's 'OWS' that take us by surprise!
- * Learning about life in all its fullness.

Mirrors

- * Opportunities to reflect on their experiences.
- * Looking inside yourself.
- * Consider life's big questions and reach for some possible answers.
- * Learning from life by exploring our own insights and those of others.

Doors

- * Opportunities for children to respond.
- * Moving onto a new path or situation.
- * To do something creative to develop and apply our ideas.
- * Learning to live out our beliefs and values.

Appendix B

British Values

Extract from the DfE document, 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools'.

Schools should promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This can help schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the requirements of section 78 of the Education Act 2002, in their provision of SMSC.

(The Prevent Strategy 2011: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>)

Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British Values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British Values would be completely at odds with schools' duty to provide SMSC. The Teachers' Standards expect teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes not undermining fundamental British Values.

Through their provision of SMSC, schools should:

- enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
- encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

The list below describes the understanding and knowledge expected of pupils as a result of schools promoting fundamental British values.

- an understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process;
- an appreciation that living under the rule of law protects individual citizens and is essential for their wellbeing and safety;
- an understanding that there is a separation of power between the executive and the judiciary, and that while some public bodies such as the police and the army can be held to account through Parliament, others such as the courts maintain independence;
- an understanding that the freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law;
- an acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour; and
- an understanding of the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination.

It is not necessary for schools or individuals to 'promote' teachings, beliefs or opinions that conflict with their own, but nor is it acceptable for schools to promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.

(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf)

Appendix C

Courageous Advocacy

By way of a working definition, when using the term 'courageous advocacy' we are referring to the act of speaking out against an issue of injustice, often on behalf of those whose voice is not heard. Speaking out, at whatever level this takes place, requires an element (and sometimes a great deal) of courage! Becoming a courageous advocate for change, therefore, must involve being informed about an issue and it must move beyond simply knowing, to saying and doing. Educating for courageous advocacy must embody an ethos of action-taking, challenging injustice and becoming agents of change in the transformation of ourselves, our relationships and our communities from the local level to the global.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/180521%20Courageous%20Advocacy%20%28final%29.pdf>

Appendix D

Related documents:

RE (Religious Education) Policy

PSHCE policy (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education)

Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Amend as needed

History of most recent policy changes and review period

Date	Page	Change(s) made	Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, change in legislation)
May 2023	All	New policy	

Policy Owner	Education Directorate
Date Adopted	June 2023
Latest Review Date	June 2023
Next Review Date	June 2026
Level	Level 2
DBAT Policy levels:	
LEVEL 1	DBAT policy for adoption (no changes can be made by the Academy Council; the Academy Council must adopt the policy)
LEVEL 2	DBAT policy for adoption and local approval, with areas for the Academy to update regarding local practice (the main body of the policy cannot be changed)
LEVEL 3	DBAT model policy that the Academy can adopt if it wishes

LEVEL 4	Local policy to be approved by the Academy Council
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